Attachment 1

2003 AASHTO

Excellence and Innovation Awards

Table of Contents

Excellence and Innovation Awards

Standing Committee on Quality Awards Council

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Special Thanks

The Standing Committee on Quality Awards Council would like to recognize everyone who has helped to make this a successful program. The applicants this year responded to the improved system by providing high quality applications.

The Board of Examiners stepped up to the plate by providing outstanding service to the team.

To the CAO's, AASHTO staff and all the others who provided us a fast response, thank you.

You have made this job a little easier.

History of the AASHTO Team Excellence Award Program

As transportation projects and programs become more complex, the need for highly skilled teams becomes more pressing and more apparent.

Seven years ago, AASHTO's Standing Committee on Quality (SCoQ) addressed the need to encourage team formation and team function by recognizing outstanding team efforts in state and federal transportation organizations throughout the country.

Teams are recognized at three levels of achievement:

Exemplary Partner –
Teams which perform at the highest level of team function, understanding and using appropriate tools and techniques, diagnosing and self-correcting on process and group dynamic issues;

Pathfinder –
Teams which accomplish their mission through use of appropriate tools and techniques; and

Trailblazer –
Teams which accomplish their missions but may not use appropriate tools and techniques.

All teams applying for recognition, including those which fail to attain an award-winning performance level, receive feedback to assist them in improving their performance in future years.

Baldrige Performance Excellence Criteria

Team performance is judged against the national Baldrige Criteria for Quality:

- Leadership
- Strategic Planning
- Customer Focus
- Information and Analysis
- Human Resource Management and Development
- Process Management
- Organizational Results

In the hopes that some of the award-winning teams' improvements will serve as best practices which can benefit other organizations, a brief summary of each team's improvement and a contact person can be found in this booklet.

Each year the SCoQ Awards Council evaluates and improves the application and scoring processes within the Program. During the 2002 Program, greater emphasis was placed on teams to obtain greater consistency of scoring. A Board of Qualified Examiners were trained.

2003 Team Excellence Results
A total of 26 teams from state highway and transportation departments applied for recognition with one receiving the President's Award, three Exemplary Partner Awards, none Pathfinder Awards and ten Trailblazer Awards.

Team applications were submitted from the District of Columbia, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, New Mexico, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. Award thresholds are established by the Awards Council based on the scores submitted by the Board of Examiners. Award plaques for Exemplary Partners are presented to State CAO's at the AASHTO Annual Meeting. Award plaques for Trailblazer and Pathfinder teams are mailed to the recipients.

2003 AASHTO President's Award for Quality

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Center for Performance Excellence
Performance Assessment Group

Contact Person: Richard H. Harris, Jr.
E-Mail Address: richaharri@state.pa.us
Team Vision - *To be the most effective Baldrige Assessment resource available to our customers.*
Team Mission - Assist The Department of Transportation to become a Baldrige-like Organization.

1. In a time when out-sourcing and downsizing of government agencies is prevalent, tools are needed to provide direction and alignment for focus on improving products and services with timeliness and efficiency. We need to be better than our competition to maintain our standing. The Baldrige model contains many tools to ensure we are the best.
2. By focusing on the customer and determining the value placed on the products and services used by the customer, the organization is able to focus our resources in a more direct manner. The organization has reviewed and mapped key processes, focusing on removing waste, improve efficiency and effectiveness.
3. As a result of implementing the criteria, the organization adopted a business model and our future leaders learned how to successfully operate a business. The importance of leadership, strategic planning, processes and focus on the customer became real as not only did they learn these concepts in the classroom but also applied this learning through the assessment process.

Impact of Team's Improvement(s):
The impacts were: focus on the customer, customer segmentation, benchmarking best practices, management by fact, integrating and aligning measures, dashboards and scorecards, gap closure and organizational learning.

EXEMPLARY PARTNER AWARDS

Team Name: Executive Management Committee (EMC)
Organization Name: The Georgetown Project (TGP)
Sponsoring Group: District Department of Transportation (DDOT)
Contact Person: Karyn Good, Communications Manager, DDOT
E-Mail Address: Karyn.Good@dc.gov
Team Mission:
To provide a major upgrade of Georgetown's (historic district in Washington, D.C.) underground utility infrastructure and streetscape while minimizing construction impact on business and residents and service interruptions, and providing informative and continuous communication to the community.

Impact of Team's Improvement(s):
Realizing the economic and quality of life impact that necessary infrastructure upgrades required by utilities and DDOT were going to have on a mixed-use community, DDOT asked each party to agree to create an entity to coordinate and combine the individual projects into one massive effort. DDOT, Pepco, Washington Gas, Verizon, and DC Water and Sewer Authority (DCWASA) signed an MOA and created an oversight entity called the Executive Management Committee (EMC). The parties' cooperative effort condensed 10-15 years of proposed consecutive utility and DDOT upgrades into one project scheduled for completion within four years. The EMC immediately made concessions to help with the impact of construction such as limiting construction activity to nights, prohibiting weekend and holiday work, etc. Special apparatuses on equipment minimizes noise. Regular community meetings are held to discuss and review the project status. Communication efforts are enhanced by the creation of a project web site, www.thegeorgetownproject.org. The efforts of the project team resulted in minimal complaints and limited loss of business. Because of this high standard of cooperation and communication, the project enjoys a high level of credibility with the community.

Team Name: Team Building
Organization Name: Kentucky Transportation Cabinet
Sponsoring Group: Department of Highways
Contact Person: Mike Hancock
E-Mail Address: Mike.Hancock@mail.state.ky.us
Team Mission:
The mission of this team is to create a shift in the culture of working relationships between Cabinet work centers, and between the Cabinet and FHWA. Additionally, we must build a culture within the Transportation Cabinet and key stakeholder agencies that focuses attention and effort to working better together. This agenda impacts the delivery of products and services by decreasing barriers to communication and coordination eases approval activities that span within and across agency lines. These enhancements though at this point are intangible, will reduce "red tape" issues that impact organizational effectiveness. In addition, the team continuously works to dissolve undesirable attitudes and behaviors that influence processes.

Impact of Team's Improvement(s):
One of the vital few strategic goals of the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet is to improve organizational performance. We now share this goal with our Federal partners. In order to achieve this goal, we must learn to eliminate and/or reduce barriers and roadblocks to communication and coordination, and learn how to work better together. This team has used multiple meeting formats to whittle away at long standing issues that have caused project delays and undesirable attitudes. The team was successful in identifying the vital few attributes that function as barriers and roadblocks to working relationships. As ad hoc activities were developed to tackle the vital few issues, the team has initiated a culture shift. Culture shifts of this nature usually take five to ten years. This team's aggressive desire for improvement has made noticeable changes in two years. The culture two years ago between KYTC and FHWA was at an all time low. Today, most people view the relationship and culture as somewhat good and getting better.

Team Name: Northern Virginia District Construction Quality Assurance Team
Organization Name: Virginia Department of Transportation
Sponsoring Group: Northern Virginia District of VDOT
Contact Person: John A. DePasquale, P.E.
E-Mail Address: John.DePasquale@VirginiaDOT.org
Team Mission:
Continuously improve the overall quality of construction in the Northern Virginia District by utilizing and sharing the talents, abilities, and resources within the construction program, in order to enhance VDOT's quality initiative to improve specification compliance as a measurable increase. As such, a NOVA Construction Quality Assurance Team (QAT) was formed. The QAT charge was to develop and implement a Quality Assurance Program for all design and construction projects in the NOVA District. The Quality Assurance Program specifically, the Quality Assurance Team (QAT) would perform the following items:

- Randomly select on-going construction projects for review to improve the quality and consistency of services.
- Support the inspection field staff by providing on-site training, mentoring, and re-engineering initiatives.
- Provide on-the-job training and sharing of technical information to project staff, consultant staff and contractor staff to support quality initiatives to provide improved and consistent project documentation and training procedures.

Impact of Team's Improvement(s):
The greatest impacts have been information sharing and dissemination of important quality enhancing tools to a decentralized workforce. Internal and external outreach programs shared information throughout the VDOT District as well as the regional construction industry. Quality Assurance Tips, Lessons Learned/Best Practices were published and a website established as a means to communicate with both internal with external customers. Construction Quality Improvement Program (CQIP) scores of quality evaluations of construction projects improved from 87% in FY 2001/2002, below the state average of 89.7% to 91.8% above the state average of 89.6 % for FY 2002/2003.

PATHFINDER AWARDS

Team Name: PENNDOT Ignition Interlock Program
Organization Name: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Sponsoring Group: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Contact Person: Gary Modi, P.E., Chief, Safety Mgt. Division
E-Mail Address: gmodi@state.pa.us
Team Mission:
Our mission is to establish the best ignition interlock program in the nation that exceeds customer expectations and results in the reduction of miles driven under intoxication (DUI) by repeat offenders thereby reducing fatalities on Pennsylvania highways. Our partners are the Ignition Interlock Device (IID) service providers, law enforcement officers, consultants (PA DUI Association), courts, and probation officers. Our suppliers are the IID manufacturers. Through our quality assurance program we serve our customers, partners, and suppliers.

Impact of Team's Improvement(s): Pennsylvania's high level goal is to reduce DUI fatalities 10% per year by the year 2005. This will result in saving 50 lives per year. The repeat offender law (Sept. 2000) provided an additional tool to achieve our goal. To be effective, a PENNDOT team created the following systematic and repeatable processes: 1) process for development of unique IID specifications and selection of IID, 2) process for developing & issuing a special ignition interlock driver license, 3) process for conducting a Quality Assurance Program that includes future improvements, 4) process for customer satisfaction measurement and incorporating findings into future actions to improve performance, and 5) systematic process of measuring results that relates to our high level goals. As a result of the implementation of the above processes, PENNDOT was able to select highly dependable IIDs, foster good relationships with IID manufacturers, create a dependable and high quality IID service provider network, and maintain a tightly monitored quality assurance program that enables us to improve quality continuously, based upon customer satisfaction measurements. The above methodology resulted in preventing over 10,000 DUI trips.

Team Name: Financial Management Team
Organization Name: South Carolina Department of Transportation
Sponsoring Group: South Carolina Department of Transportation
Contact Person: Carl Chase Jr.
E-Mail Address: chasec@dot.state.sc.us
Team Mission:
South Carolina recently embarked on the largest highway construction program in the state's history. The mission of the financial team was to develop a comprehensive Financial Management and Strategic Planning System (FMSPS) to successfully manage and report to our customers and employees at a project, program and state-wide level on the financial status of this accelerated program. In addition, we aimed to use our learned knowledge and experiences to successfully incorporate all SCDOT programs into the FMSP system.

Impact of Teams Improvement(s):
The SCDOT along with two Construction Resource Management (CRM) firms and the Federal Highway Administration have embarked on this venture using innovative financing and contracting. The Department's contract with the CRM's called for the development of a comprehensive financial management system that will remain in use long after the CRM Contract is complete. The SCDOT has the benefit of acquiring a state of the art integrated financial management computer system that tracks and manages project schedules and financial requirements, controls state cash and bond requirements and generates reports while integrating data from existing SCDOT legacy systems. In addition, the Department has benefited from the training of in-house staff on its use and cross-fertilization with the Construction Resource Management organization. The system has improved communication to its stakeholders through the consolidation of data into clear and succinct reports, automatic updates to the publicly accessed web site and real-time access to SCDOT employees. The system has generated an integration of data from existing computer legacy systems, which has improved the integrity of the data and improved performance.

Team Name: ISO 9002/17025 Lab Implementation Team
Organization Name: Bureau of Construction and Materials
Sponsoring Group: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Contact Person: Gary L. Hoffman, P.E.
E-Mail Address: gahoffman@state.pa.us
Team Mission:
The Executive Management of PENNDOT with the vision to provide outstanding customer service in the area of the Laboratory Testing Section envisioned the opportunity to pursue this goal using the ISO system. The journey began in July 2000 with the adoption of Our ISO Quality Policy Statement "The Materials and Testing Division, Laboratory Testing Section will perform accurate and timely testing for our customers". This quality system was pursued as a management tool for improving services and validating testing efforts. For the employees, it provides a method for elevating recurring issues for resolution, ensuring clear work instructions, and validating staff qualifications through identified core competencies, education and training. This international recognized certification of quality provides added credibility to the testing performed by the Laboratory Testing Section.

Impact of Team's Improvement(s):
PENNDOT's Materials and Testing Division, Laboratory Testing Section has successfully implemented ISO 9002 as an unprecedented undertaking for a State Department of Transportation in that the ISO certification is for the entire central laboratory testing functions. The team directed and applied the necessary procedures and operational policies required to successfully achieve ISO 9002 certification. This latest accomplishment is another major step forward for achieving a World Class Organization. As additional States Laboratories achieve ISO certification they will help create a national momentum of taking quality to the next highest level. It is hoped that this will lead the way for Transportation Material Suppliers, Contractors and other stakeholders to also become certified; and raise the quality of their products and services to unprecedented levels, requiring less need for costly non value adding oversight.

Team Name: GASB 34 Implementation Team
Organization Name: Missouri Department of Transportation
Sponsoring Group: MoDOT Controller's Office
Contact Person: Mara Campbell
E-Mail Address: campbm1@mail.modot.state.mo.us

Team Mission:
The mission of the GASB 34 Implementation Team was to create financial reports compliant with Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement 34 in time to meet the auditor's schedule, with existing staff and maintaining current responsibilities.

Impact of Team's Improvement(s):
The new GASB 34 compliant financial reports provide information in a format showing the general public where their money is being spent and allows comparisons of MoDOT operations to other entities. The new reports show MoDOT is accountable, a priority of the Missouri legislature and the Joint Committee on Transportation Oversight. Accountability is a value listed in MoDOT's Strategic Plan which guides the Business Plan goals and implementation strategies. The Missouri Highway and Transportation Commission benefits from the new financial statements. Now they have a tool to hold MoDOT accountable. MoDOT's Director and Managers benefit from the new reports by having data to base decisions that previously had not been available. A significant accomplishment of the team was the development of a method to value all state owned roads, bridges and right of way. They created financial reports that show each program's effectiveness and the overall change in financial position as a result of the department's operations. The team created and documented a process for accessing data for ongoing changes to the transportation infrastructure.

Team Name: 2003 Leadership Conference Planning Team
Organization Name: Michigan DOT
Sponsoring Group: Management Group Steering Committee and Gloria J. Jeff, Director
Contact Person: Dee Parker
E-Mail Address: parkerde@michigan.gov

Team Mission:
To plan and execute a leadership conference for MDOT's current and potential leaders (approximately 320 individuals).

Impact of Team's Improvement(s):
The team was responsible for the conference planning and execution, including arranging speakers, planning special activities, meals, transportation, housing and materials. The team sought input and approval from the MDOT Management Group Steering Committee (MGSC) as needed. This conference received one of the highest ratings of any conference since 1993, based on participants' responses to the evaluation survey. Surveys were completed by over 92 percent of participants. There was very little variation in the overall value of the conference by work location (central or region), or by frequency of attending a MDOT Leadership Conference (first time or repeat attendance). Participants written comments on the survey reflected, to a very great degree, the key messages of the conference that related directly to the conference objectives. One of our highest rated speakers at the conference was the new director, in her first major appearance before a significant number of department employees. As part of the conference evaluation survey, participants were also asked to indicate how effective was the conference in reinforcing our goal of "Working Together as Team MDOT" and team building. Overall participants responded with high marks to both questions with average scores of 4.4. Considering that nearly a third of the participants were new leaders, which was not the case five years ago.

Team Name: District 10 ISO 14001 Implementation Team
Organization Name: PENNDOT, District 10-0
Sponsoring Group: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Contact Person: Richard Pavic
E-Mail Address: rpavic@state.pa.us
Team Mission:
For PENNDOT Engineering District 10's Maintenance Unit, consisting of the counties of Armstrong, Butler, Clarion, Indiana and Jefferson, to obtain International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 14001 Registration for its Strategic Environmental Management Program (SEMP) related to maintenance activities consisting of Winter Services, Stockpile/ Garage Management and Erosion and Sedimentation (E&S) Control Measures. The ISO 14001 Implementation Team consisting of a SEMP Process Owner and a cross-section of management and non-management level personnel totaling 72 other members from across the District was to pilot the development and implementation of our Strategic Environmental Management Program (SEMP) as an Environmental Management System (EMS) for PENNDOT statewide that conforms to the ISO 14001:1996 Standard.

Impact of Team Improvement(s):
The team was responsible for developing a SEMP Manual (Sound Environmental Practices Manual) that is available to all employees in hard copy and electronic versions which provide guidance documentation related to the significant aspects addressed under the SEMP. Electronic versions of the SEMP Manual are maintained for use by all employees on the District network. Hard copies of the SEMP Manual are maintained at the District Maintenance Office, County Offices and County Stockpiles. Guidance documentation in the SEMP Manual includes process mapping, training programs, quality assurance evaluations, employee responsibility statements, etc. related to each of the individual environmental aspects outlined in the SEMP. Process Maps have been developed for each of the significant aspects using the principles and framework of Plan-Do-Check-Act. These Process Maps also identify responsibilities associated with each action.

Team Name: Local Government Project Procedures (LGPP) Team
Organization Name: Texas Department of Transportation
Sponsoring Group: Ms. Jennifer D. Soldano, Director, Contract Services Office **Contact Person:** Emily Margrett
E-Mail Address: emargre@dot.state.tx.us
Team Mission:
The continuous improvement of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) management processes for transportation projects funded or developed in cooperation with local governments (LGs). The team's resolve to carryout this mission resulted in the development and implementation of Local Government Project Procedures for transportation projects that are let by the LG. The mission currently guides the Team's on-going commitment to solicit end-user feedback; to integrate revisions to the procedures based upon this feedback; and to provide training when necessary. These on-going efforts assure that locally-let transportation projects for developing roads, rails, trails, historic building renovations, intelligent transportation projects, transportation museums, and related projects under TxDOT oversight proceed most expeditiously.

Impact of Team's Improvement(s):
The immediate impact was the successful development and implementation of a comprehensive approach to managing oversight of locally let transportation projects. The Team complied with TxDOT administration's directive to develop project procedures for use by LGs. In 2002, the LGPP Team:

- Established an on-going forum between 11 divisions and two administrative offices to focus on LG project issues.
- Developed and implemented federally-approved guidance relating to construction, design, environmental affairs and contracting for transportation projects.
- Created a Local Government Project Procedures website to serve many customers.
- Developed and implemented a related training program.
- Achieved federal and administrative objectives at minimal cost, due to teamwork. No additional TxDOT staff or outsourcing to consultants was necessary.

Team Name: Hydraulics Review Team
Organization Name: Maryland State Highway Administration
Sponsoring Group: Highway Hydraulics Division
Contact Person: Jason Alwine
E-Mail Address: jalwine@sha.state.md.us
Team Mission:
To provide comprehensive hydraulics reviews and customer service for developments adjacent to state highways by developing and maintaining a process that allows the tracking, review, customer service and archiving of hydraulics and storm water management designs through continuous improvement in team capabilities through process enhancements, personal capabilities through training, and customer relations through communication, consistency and flexibility. The team's mission is consistent with SHA's Business Plan, its environmental policy to be the leading environmental steward in Maryland, and its mission to provide the customers with a safe, well-maintained and attractive highway system that offers mobility and supports Maryland's communities, economy and environment.

Impact of Team's Improvement(s):
The program of providing hydraulics reviews for projects adjacent to State highways began in the 1980's. At the time, such reviews were considered to be the lowest priority and a subsequent 6-month backlog resulted even though only a hundred or so reviews came through each year. In the early 1990's, this work was being done by one full-time employee, various in-house staff doing reviews and one consultant. Still, low priority meant slow turnaround and many different reviewers at many different experience levels meant inconsistent reviews that were of narrower scope. With the new process, hydraulic reviews for access permits are now turned around in less than 2 weeks on average, priority levels are high, products are uniform, and customer service and access have been greatly improved. The secondary processes developed by the program resulted in streamlining and new relationships. The targeted increase in the number of qualified team members resulted in greater team depth.

Team Name: NMSH&TD District Six Mentoring Team
Organization Name: New Mexico Department of Transportation
Sponsoring Group: New Mexico Department of Transportation
Contact Person: Larry Maynard, District Six Engineer
E-Mail Address: Larry.Maynard@nmshtd.state.nm.us
Team Mission:
With a potential for loss of experience from the District, no free time, and an already extended training budget, it was determined to utilize District resources to develop a "Mentoring Program" that would cater to the "New Highway Engineering Technician". District Six wanted to develop improvements to project documentation, timely payments to contractors/partners, timely completion and finalization of projects, satisfied employees, decreased change orders, reduced claims, and design projected cost equal to bid cost and equal to constructed cost. All of this while facing the dilemma of potential decreases in knowledge, skills, and abilities due to extensive retirement of experienced technicians and supervisors.

Impact of Team's Improvement(s):
The start up costs for an annual "Mentoring Program" is $ 0.00 for equipment, $125.00 for materials, and 640 employee hours. Fifteen construction supervisors work the program. Fifty-one Highway Engineering Technicians from construction, seven Maintenance supervisors, and eleven Maintenance employees benefited from the program this year. There has been noted improvement to employee's knowledge, skills, and abilities measured by improved audits (figure 4). There is measurable improvement in time management as shown by the improvement to timely pay estimates and project documentation finals. There has been a noted improvement to employee confidence, attitude, and general climate based on non-measurable improved communications and documentation.

TRAILBLAZER AWARDS

Team Name: NMSH&TD Environmental Section
Organization Name: New Mexico Department of Transportation
Sponsoring Group: New Mexico Department of Transportation
Contact Person: Steve Reed, Environmental Program Manager
E-Mail Address: Steve.Reed@nmshtd.state.nm.us
Team Mission:
Meeting environmental commitments during construction is a critical element of transportation project development. In the late 90s, the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department, like many other State transportation departments, was having difficulty meeting environmental commitments and permit conditions during the construction of a number of projects. The department's credibility with resource management agencies and the public eroded due to a series of construction related incidents. Management concern over this issue led to a National Quality Initiative (NQI) session involving individuals from a number of different areas within the Department to develop a program solution. The goals of the program are:

- To ensure compliance with environmental commitments and mitigation found in the environmental document, construction plans, regulatory permits.
- To assist the Department and contractors in avoiding delays and citations from regulatory agencies.
- To promote credibility for the Department with the public and regulatory agencies.
- To assist contractors with the process of environmental and cultural resource approvals in off-site areas.

Impact of Team's Improvement(s):
Prior to the implementation of this program, major construction related incidents involving environmental permits and commitments during construction were occurring at the rate of four to six per year. Over the past 12 months, there has only been one major construction related incident. The effectiveness of the program increases with time as construction personnel become

more knowledgeable about environmental requirements and secure in knowing when to ask for assistance. Implementation of the program has led to a cultural change in District awareness and responsibility for environmental issues and environmental staff in understanding issues faced during construction. This change represents an important shift in standard operating procedures for the Department.

A midterm evaluation of the program by District engineers and project managers resulted in very positive support for the program and a strong desire to continue.

Team Name: MoDOT Social and Economic Indicator Team
Organization Name: Missouri Department of Transportation
Sponsoring Group: MoDOT
Contact Person: Mara Campbell
E-Mail Address: campbm1@mail.modot.state.mo.us
Team Mission:
The Social Economic Indicator Resource (SEIR) project and webpage provides up-to-date, authoritative social and economic data and information for use in transportation planning, Title VI and protected population analysis and project development/ environmental clearance. This project provides value to our customers through ensuring the human components of transportation are considered during all planning and project stages. We expect an overall improvement in our organizational effectiveness through better knowledge of our customers and the social, economic and community context. The project was developed by two MoDOT teams, one considered high level data users and a second group of less proficient users but seen as leaders by others in the department (early adopters). The project provided a learning experience for all involved, especially those not proficient in the use of social and economic data use. Additionally, 5 training session were held to familiarize employees, stakeholders and partners with the webpage and its use.

Impact of Team's Improvement(s):
This project and the resulting website provides easy access to up-to-date social and economic information that is relevant, authoritative, convenient and understandable. Further, the information has been customized for transportation applications. The SEIR website provides information to address the demographic and economic issues faced in transportation planning and development at all levels. From local planning groups who need to know about their neighborhood, to Metropolitan Planning Organizations who need to know the location of minority populations, to the State DOT in need of projected population numbers for advanced planning, all can use the SEIR website to find the answers they need.

Team Name: Port Aransas Ferry System
Organization Name: Texas Department of Transportation
Sponsoring Group: David Casteel
Contact Person: Emily Margrett
E-Mail Address: emargre@dot.state.tx.us
Team Mission:
The team will provide reliable transportation, and improve customer service by reducing the wait time for boarding ferryboats. Customer service will be improved by having more boats available during peak periods, training personnel in safety measures, and allowing them to receive training in other areas to expand their personal learning. Team members will develop and improve maintenance standards and methods. Loading schedules will be improved for efficiency and safety.

Impact of Team's Improvement(s):
The SH 361 intersection with the Corpus Christi Ship Channel has been plagued with delays to motorists for several years. Travelers expressed frustration about excessive delays as they wait for lines for ferry boarding. During the spring and summer of 2001, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) was the subject of public criticism because of excessive land side delays experienced at this intersection. Several ferryboats undergoing extensive repair were out of service causing wait time to exceed two hours. Newspaper articles and letters to the editor about the long delays were common. In the summer of 2001, a group representing the City of Port Aransas, the Port Aransas Chamber of Commerce and others approached the local office of TxDOT requesting improvements. The TxDOT office requested one year to optimize existing ferry operations and plan for improvements. The group agreed. Changes improving service included expanded boat schedules. TxDOT worked with the U.S. Coast Guard to improve safety and maintenance. In September 2002, TxDOT facilitated the formation of an operations study team composed of persons who use the intersection on a daily basis. The team assisted TxDOT in fulfilling the commitment made in 2001 to plan for improvements. The team accomplished the task of planning for short term improvements and began efforts for mid and long term planning.

Team Name: NOVA Smart Traffic Signal System
Organization Name: Virginia Department of Transportation
Sponsoring Group: VDOT
Contact Person: Mark Hagan
E-Mail Address: mark.hagan@virginiadot.org
Team Mission:
Providing Safe and Efficient Traffic Signal Systems Operations including plan development and implementation to facilitate efficient and safe traffic flows, reduced congestion, delays, and Quick Incident Response to Reduce Secondary Traffic Crashes and Incidences, by Providing state of the art technologies, a professional well-learned staff, constant improvements in knowledge and technologies and detailed "well thought out" collaborative coordination with adjacent jurisdictions and emergency responders.

Impact of Team's Improvement(s):
The Northern Virginia District (NOVA) Smart Traffic Signal System (STSS) staff developed a "High Value Optimization Project" to better manage the daily traffic operations for one of the nation's busiest and most congested areas, the Washington DC Metropolitan region. Through innovative application of a "state of the art" traffic signal control system, and commonsense project management the STSS staff interweaved a project management plan, aggressive timing plan development and signal optimization, and a seamless integrated traffic signal network to leverage outstanding savings in travel delay, congestion savings, and reduced emissions. VDOT Staff needed a way of addressing traffic signal optimization taking into account the rapid growth of development, dynamic regional shifts in traffic patterns due to major construction projects (major interstate construction projects). Staff found that to account for all of these factors they needed a way of keeping ahead of these. The end state is a strong *Traffic Signal Optimization Project* which resulted in impressive reduction in over 400 staff-hours per month in savings resulting in more staff training and intellectual capacity building, over 66% reduction in congestion related complaints by commuters, reduced emissions, and an impressive operational savings to drivers during the year.

Team Name: Project Dashboard Team
Organization Name: Virginia Department of Transportation
Sponsoring Group: Virginia Department of Transportation
Contact Person: Constance S. Sorrell
E-Mail Address: Connie.Sorrell@VirginiaDOT.org
Team Mission:
Our mission was to develop a tool for quick and simple assessment of construction project and the construction program status. This would become a report to hold VDOT accountable for it's work in a very public way, and demonstrate good stewardship of the taxpayer's funds. As the team, and all of VDOT, learned how to use the new tool, we could become more effective in delivering construction projects on time and within budget. We would apply our VDOT values of Truth, Trust, and Teamwork. We would tell the truth, we would gain the public's trust, and we would develop better teamwork with the public we serve.

Impact of Team's Improvement(s):
With the help of many key "experts" within the agency, the team was able to develop a new way to view program and project status. This was used immediately within VDOT to help focus on advertising and constructing projects on time, and on delivering them within budget. The new tool (and report) was then made available to everyone through the World Wide Web. VDOT's business was suddenly made very transparent. A new emphasis on teamwork was developing within VDOT, and with the public. Like a car dashboard can alert a driver if something is going wrong, VDOT's Dashboard alerts project teams and the public if something is wrong. A key feature of the Dashboard is a built-in way to contact the responsible engineer on a project, and ask questions or make comments. A response is sent back the same way, within 2 or 3 working days. In the first few weeks of being on the Web, the site received 14,800 visits. There have been very positive comments and reviews from the media, the public, legislators, and contractors. The response within VDOT has also been positive, as goals have been set, and improvements are being made in project delivery.

Team Name: TDOT Planning Assessment Project Team
Organization Name: Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT)
Sponsoring Group: TDOT
Contact Person: Preston Elliott, Planning Division
E-Mail Address: Preston.elliott@state.tn.us
Team Mission:
To advance the Department's strategic initiative of developing a needs based planned approach to transportation systems development through the undertaking and preparation of a department-wide planning assessment.

Impact of Team's Improvement(s):
In 1998, the Department initiated a strategic planning process aimed at addressing the numerous business issues facing the agency including how to better engage transportation stakeholders in the planning process and how to balance growing transportation system demands with shrinking fiscal resources. In 2002, the Department's leadership created an internal project team to coordinate and oversee an assessment of TDOT's long range transportation planning process. The assessment included:

- An identification of the Department's current planning practices
- A listing of "Critical Issues" to the Department and other stakeholders in transportation planning for Tennessee
- An understanding of TDOT's internal capabilities in planning
- A review of other State DOT practices, and
- A recommended plan of action for an improved planning process.

With the assistance of a consulting firm, the team completed its assignment identifying 34 recommendations concerning improvements to TDOT's long range transportation planning process. The 34 recommendations were grouped into six specific areas of emphasis including development of a multimodal plan, public involvement, stakeholder partnership, planning tools and technology, improved planning process, and institutional and organizational issues.

Team Name: PENNDOT Innovations Council
Organization Name: PENNDOT
Sponsoring Group: Center for Performance Excellence
Contact Person: Paul E. Reed, Jr.
E-Mail Address: pareed@state.pa.us
Team Mission:
The Council Mission is "To identify, gather and disseminate organizational innovations and best practices throughout the Department". If the Council is successful in the completion of the Mission, they will share equipment improvements, process, and procedures improvements in highway maintenance, design and construction. These are of high importance to the traveling public of the state and the legislators who govern the state and this translates into increasing value to all of the Transportation Departments customers. The Council, by fulfilling their Mission, can provide the opportunity for Department organizations to reduce costs associated with the duplication of effort. The reduced costs can include labor, materials, and equipment. The reduction can also be found in the improvement of service and support processes associated with the design, construction and maintenance of the Department of Transportation. Personal learning is a key part of the Department's initiatives. Some of the programs presented to the Council have included, but not limited to, mentoring, increased training opportunities, advanced technology to provide training via the video conferences, and mobile training centers.

Impact of Team's Improvement(s):
Organizations within the Department now look to the Council as a point of reference for improvements to ideas and practices they are working on or presenting. The Department has developed a database in which the innovative ideas and best practices are available for review by all department employees and in preparation for conferences as agenda items. The presentations have become an opportunity for rank and file members to present their solutions to problems and the results these solutions have shown. They have also taken the initiative to begin to share the ideas and practices with other organizations.

Team Name: PENNDOT Workers Memorial Team
Organization Name: PENNDOT
Sponsoring Group: PENNDOT
Contact Person: Kelly Cielo
E-Mail Address: kcielo@state.pa.us
Team Mission:
To commemorate those PENNDOT employees who have lost their lives in the line of duty while
building, maintaining, and protecting the Pennsylvania roadways. To increase safety awareness to the general public and current PENNDOT employees and to reinforce our commitment to a safer working environment for ourselves, our co-workers, and the motoring public.

Impact of Team's Improvement(s):
In the process of developing this initiative ,several issues emerged. Project management tools and action plans, along with problem solving techniques, kept the team running smoothly. The team's mission related to four of PENNDOT's seven strategic focus areas - Quality of Life, Relationship Building, Safety, and Leadership at all Levels. The team's mission also links directly to our values (Service, Integrity, People, Performance). The team worked diligently over several months in its infancy stage gathering information from other states, agencies, partners and customers. In lieu of facts gathered, the team envisioned the memorial to be a life-size sculpture. A monument that would have different meanings to different people, poignant and respectable.

Team Name: NMSHTD Construction Project Crew Org 52-18 & Value Engineering Team
Organization Name: New Mexico Department of Transportation
Sponsoring Group: New Mexico Department of Transportation
Contact Person: Earle Smith
E-Mail Address: earle.smith@nmshtd.state.nm.us
Team Mission:
The New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department is committed to meet the state's transportation needs with the main goal to move people and goods effectively and safely in a productive and cost-effective innovative manner. We strive to work together to provide leadership through partnering, problem solving and resource sharing to foster a positive learning and safe work environment for our employees while ensuring a quality project for the consumer.

Impact of Team's Improvement(s):
This project consisted of resurfacing, rehabilitation and restoration RRR 16.7 miles of two-lane highway north of Tularosa to the Lincoln County Line on US 54 in New Mexico. US 54 is a major east west highway, running from Liberal, Kansas west to El Paso, Texas. With the advent of the North American Free Trade Agreement NAFTA, there has been and is expected to be more traffic from Mexico using this route. This section had little or no shoulders. The Department and Contractor personnel worked together through weekly partnering meetings to lead in constructing a quality project that was completed within the contract time and budget. An initial measurement of the roadway smoothness was conducted prior to roadway construction using a profilograph. Testing after construction shows a significant increase in roadway smoothness providing a more comfortable riding experience for the highway traveler. Problems were addressed and resolved that enhanced the safety and drivability of the roadway through a Value Engineering Brainstorming Session with different sections within the Department in which solutions were provided that utilized existing departmental resources, personnel and required no additional funding for the project.

Team Name: Amarillo Rural Intelligent transportation System
Organization Name: Texas Department of Transportation
Sponsoring Group: Mark. E. Tomlinson, P.E.
Contact Person: Emily Margrett
E-Mail Address: emargre@dot.state.tx.us
Team Mission:
The Amarillo Rural ITS will gather traffic, weather, road conditions, and emergency information and deliver it to TxDOT maintenance personnel and the public for use. Intelligent Transportation Systems are an important part of the operation of surface transportation systems and service to the traveling public. It is in the public's best interest for TxDOT to share transportation information in order to increase the mobility, safety, and efficiency of the transportation system. Creating a Rural Intelligent Transportation System which includes a Traffic Management Center allows TxDOT to make all transportation related information available to internal and external customers. The creation of a Rural ITS Architecture and ITS Deployment Plan strengthens relationships with other agencies, increasing TxDOT's overall effectiveness regarding emergency service agencies and the traveling public. Teams are required to learn about technical aspects of installing, operating, and maintaining an ITS, and how it should interact with current and planned applications in other agencies.

Impact of the Teams Improvement(s):
The team successfully overcame technical challenges resulting in the installation and operation of a Rural ITS used for situations unique to a rural transportation district. The system successfully operated with little or no technical problems for over six months. The team's work resulted in availability of reliable and accurate information to the traveling public during inclement weather and other traffic related incidents. The team's work resulted in on-going working relationships with local law-enforcement and emergency management authorities. The team also reinstated the district's Traffic Management Team – which will meet on a regular basis to critique incidents and share information about upcoming scheduled traffic incidents.

Congratulations

Congratulations and thank you to the following who submitted applications and received feedback responses:

Team Name: County Work Plan
Organization Name: Ohio Department of Transportation
Sponsoring Group: Division of Highway Operations
Contact Person: Kathy Barber, Administrator, Office of Quality & Operations
E-Mail Address: Kathy.barber@dot.state.oh.us

Team Name: NMSH&TD P.S.& E. Section
Organization Name: New Mexico Department of Transportation
Sponsoring Group: New Mexico Department of Transportation
Contact Person: Yolanda Roybal, P.S.&E. Section Manager
E-Mail Address: yolanda.roybal@nmshtd.state.nm.us

Team Name: Bay Region Maintenance Business Team
Organization Name: Michigan Department of Transportation
Sponsoring Group: Michigan Department of Transportation
Contact Person: Terry A. Stepanski
E-Mail Address: stepanskit@michigan.gov

FRANCIS B. FRANCOIS AWARD for INNOVATION

In our rapidly changing world of transportation, few leaders have left such a lasting imprint as Francis B. Francois, former Executive Director of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, who completed an 18-year career in 1999.

To honor his achievements, and to continue the legacy of innovative thought that he embodied, in 2000 AASHTO established an academic endowment bestowed annually upon a state department of transportation that has developed innovative transportation programs or projects.

The award-winning department will designate a state university as the recipient of a $10,000 graduate fellowship from AASHTO, to be conferred upon an applicant pursuing an advanced transportation-related degree. The AASHTO Standing Committee on Quality's Awards Council has been delegated responsibility for the competitions for the Francis B. Francois Award for Innovation.

This year, seven states submitted nominations for consideration.

2003 Francis B. Francois Award for Innovation Winner

Streamlining Environmental Processes
State: Ohio Department of Transportation
Contact: C. Kathleen Barber
E-mail: Kathy.Barber@dot.state.oh.us

Streamlining environmental processes has become a way of doing business at ODOT for the last several years. ODOT has worked successfully with FHWA to secure an aggressive *Programmatic Agreement for Categorical Exclusions* (CE); and, with FHWA and OSHPO to develop a *Memorandum of Understanding* (MOU) for the Section 106 Process and with the OSHPO to develop a *History/Architecture Thematic Review and Table.*

The innovations of the *CE Programmatic Agreement* have evolved over the years and are different from many other states. ODOT and FHWA's Ohio Division have worked cooperatively to ensure that this programmatic agreement balances the need to advance transportation projects without compromising environmental resources. ODOT's CE agreement provides a simple method of meeting the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and preparing high-quality documents. The Programmatic Agreement allows for ODOT projects to be processed efficiently as either exempt projects, requiring no documentation, or as categorical exclusions, using one of four levels. Typically, CE Level 1 and 2 projects involve culvert and bridge replacements, general highway improvements and construction of realignments or minor new highways. Projects with higher level impacts are elevated to a CE Level 3 or 4, based on context and intensity of the impacts. Many other types of projects can be processed as categorical exclusions and are defined in the programmatic agreement. (See Attachment A – Table which lists Project Types in ODOT's Categorical Exclusion Process) A threshold limit has been established for impacts, right-of-way acquisitions and relocations at each CE level to ensure statewide consistency throughout ODOT's twelve district offices.

ODOT's *CE Programmatic Agreement* "pushes the envelope" allowing a variety of projects to be processed as low-level simple CEs rather than requiring preparation of complex environmental assessments or environmental impact statements. This increased flexibility is based on ODOT's past experiences and uses an impact based approach for analyzing environmental resources rather than processing "typical" projects under a standard document format – as it had been done in the past. In the late 1990's, ODOT decentralized many of its services to the district offices, including environmental actions. Prior to decentralization, each environmental document required approval from ODOT's central office, slowing projects and incurring increased costs. As the 21st Century approached, ODOT took the initiative to break-through existing paradigms and create a CE programmatic agreement that would expand its authority for documenting and approving projects event at the district level.

The *Section 106 MOU*, is an interagency agreement between ODOT, OSHPO & FHWA for maintenance and minor highway projects with no potential to cause effects. It was a streamlining and paperwork reduction initiative for all three agencies and establishes a list of project types or activities that, under the agreement, would be deemed exempt and require no further review under 36CFR Part 800.

With the *Section 106 MOU*, all three agencies, particularly ODOT and OSHPO, realized that a large volume of work requiring review under Section 106 were for the projects identified under the MOU as exempt (requiring no further review under 36 CFR Part 800). When 36 CFR Part 800 was revised and reissued in 1999, a section (36 CFR Section 800.3{a}{1} was written to say that if an undertaking was a type of activity that had no potential to cause effects on historic properties, the agency official had no further obligations under Section 106 or this part of 36 CFR Part 800. This section, however, did not identify what those types of activities might be. In 1999, ODOT, FHWA and OSHPO verbally agreed to a process on how ODOT would document such findings and how those findings would be reported to FHWA and

OSHPO. This process worked fine, but resulted in large quarterly reports because of the volume of such projects/activities that were being processed under this section.

The *Thematic Review* was developed for a project with five 2000' wide corridors along a 70 mile long route of a proposed new highway in northwest Ohio. This was in an area of Ohio where no pre-existing historic context had been developed. Development of the thematic review/historic context provides the framework for evaluating the National Historic Register of Historic Places eligibility and integrity of historical/architectural resources. The *History/Architecture Table* was developed as an extension of the thematic review/historic context in order to manage a project with a large volume of properties 50 years of age or older. It allows the researcher to organize their field data and observations in a way that eliminates the need to fill out Ohio Historic Inventory forms on each property and considerably reduces the amount of text that would be needed in a survey report to describe findings.

At the proposed new highway in northwest Ohio in which the *Thematic Review* was developed for, this was an area where no pre-existing historic context had been developed. Without that context, each property would have to be evaluated on its own merits and/or within a "micro" review area. The history/ architecture table was developed as an extension of the thematic review/historic context in order to manage a project with a large volume of properties 50 years of age or older. It allows the researcher to organize their field data and observations in a way that eliminates the need to fill out Ohio Historic Inventory forms for each property, and considerably reduces the amount of text and preparation time that would be needed in a survey report to describe findings. This concept, when used in conjunction with a thematic review/historic context and a photolog, saves considerable time and money on the project. It allows for faster preparation of a field survey document and allows for a more rapid review at ODOT and the OSHPO.

The innovation for the *CE Programmatic Agreement* and the *Section 106 MOU* allows the agencies to streamline environmental documents and Section 106 processing and review. This innovation eliminates considerable paperwork and time spent for ODOT, FHWA and OSHPO. It has established a baseline of understanding for the agencies to process certain types of projects/activities on Ohio's transportation program.

Having these agreements in place allows the agencies to proceed with the same understanding of what Federal undertakings are exempted in Ohio. The *thematic review/historic context* was developed in partnership with the consultant doing the fieldwork and the OSHPO, which would have the final review. With these partners working with ODOT to develop the study, buy-in on the approach and results by OSHPO would be a guarantee. With the consultant working directly with ODOT and OSHPO, production of a survey report with no surprises for both agencies would be a guarantee. The use of the *history/architecture table* allows the researcher to easily organize and evaluate resources and to report the survey findings in a much more concise manner. It allows the field researcher/report preparer to perform both tasks more quickly than before. This then translates into a document that is much easier and quicker to review by both ODOT and OSHPO. Both methodologies streamline the recordation, evaluation and review process at ODOT and OSHPO, resulting in considerable savings in time and money.